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INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Services Program (ESP) is a matching grants program that provides financial assistance to local governments for environmental projects. Administered by the Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Local Government Assistance, the ESP helps finance projects that will enhance environmental quality in New Jersey.

The statutory authority for the ESP is the Environmental Aid Act (N.J.S.A. 13:1H-1 et seq.) which authorizes the DEP to issue local matching grants from \$1,000 to \$2,500 to environmental commissions and soil conservation districts.

ESP grant monies may be used to fund the following projects:

- environmental resource inventories
- brownfields redevelopment planning
- smart growth and sustainable communities planning
- beach monitoring and management projects
- environmental trail designs
- lake rehabilitation studies
- stream and water quality testing
- wellhead delineation
- surveys of threatened and endangered species
- environmental education programs
- community outreach initiatives
- designing or implementing projects that initiate and/or expand sustainable communities

In addition, ESP grants may be used to fund an incomplete phase of an environmental project in progress – from scoping and planning to project development and implementation.

The information contained in this application package will provide additional details on projects that are eligible for funding through the ESP program along with the requirements for submitting an application in accordance with the rules published in the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 7:6 -1.1 et seq.).

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

A local environmental agency is eligible to submit an application for an ESP matching grant. A "local environmental agency" is defined as a municipal environmental commission, a joint environmental commission (established by two or more municipalities), a county environmental commission, or a soil conservation district. For a municipal or joint municipal environmental

commission to be eligible for funding, it must be an official environmental commission established by a municipal ordinance prepared in accordance with the state law governing the formation of municipal environmental commissions (N.J.S.A. 40:56A et seq.). A county environmental commission must be established by county ordinance/resolution reflecting similar powers and membership ascribed to a municipal environmental commission.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

There are many projects that may be eligible for funding through the ESP. The following are a few examples:

A. IDENTIFICATION PROJECTS

1. Natural or Environmental Resource Inventories (NRI/ERI) and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping projects, in whole or in part, which identify stream corridors, wetlands, flood plains, forestry resources, steep slopes, open spaces, scenic areas, wildlife habitats, cultural features and potential recreation and conservation lands.
2. Pollution Prevention/Right-to-Know inventories that identify permitted facilities and the levels of toxic materials associated with those facilities.
3. Brownfield inventories that identify abandoned or underutilized, contaminated properties/sites that can be cleaned up and returned to viable productive use in the community.
4. Projects that identify both the sources of impairment and opportunity for improvement of the water resources within a watershed.

B. PLANNING STUDIES AND REPORTS

1. Either new or updated planning studies describing strategies to protect natural and environmental resources that create, protect and/or preserve: greenways, open space, stream corridors, urban, suburban and rural trails, surface and groundwater resources, air quality, energy resources, etc.
2. Projects that advance the use of resource based planning on the GIS.

C. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROJECTS

An environmentally sustainable community is one that manages and stewards its natural resources and environmental assets such that their value is preserved, restored and enhanced for present and future generations; and such stewardship complements the communities efforts to foster economic and social health. The ESP grants may be used for developing environmental sustainability plans, including measurement and tracking systems for progress towards sustainability (e.g. goals and indicators); designing and implementing projects that initiate and/or expand sustainable practices, etc. For more information, please contact Athena Sarafides at (609) 633-1161.

D. URBAN PROJECTS

Urban environmental inventories (UEIs) and projects designed to inventory the quality of life factors in all aspects of the environment in an urban setting.

E. ORDINANCES AND MASTER PLAN MODIFICATIONS

1. Preparation of draft ordinances and master plan amendments to protect natural and environmental resources, and to address overall environmental quality.
2. As part of a “center designation” report for the State Planning Commission, an applicant may examine and draft an ordinance for the increased protection of natural resources. Examples include: buffers for streams and wetlands, forest and woodland protection, and landscaping standards and best management practices for non-point source pollution in storm water.

F. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Projects designed to educate or disseminate educational information to the public on environmental issues, and/or the development and distribution of educational materials (e.g. calendars, bumper stickers, brochures, etc.).

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following are considered eligible costs:

- Fees and direct expenses for consultants, architects, cartographers, GIS specialists, engineers, environmental resource consultants, historic preservationists, landscape architects, planners, etc. **The costs associated with these expenses may not exceed 50% of the total project cost unless otherwise determined to be eligible expenses by the Department.**

NOTE: A state approved subcontractor certification form must be completed and signed by both parties (i.e. grantee and subcontractor) if a subcontractor is performing the tasks outlined in the grant agreement.

- The cost of materials and supplies for report and/or map reproduction, publications, draft ordinances and policy recommendations, maps, diagrams, etc.
- The purchase of “capital-type” goods, such as equipment and/or machinery that is necessary to complete the project. The applicant shall have prior approval from the ESP before these costs can be considered.

NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following are ***not*** eligible for funding under the ESP Matching Grants Program, ***nor*** are they eligible to be used as a match on the part of a local environmental agency:

- charges for time spent by volunteers, paid municipal and/or county employees
- costs for the acquisition of real property
- fringe benefits and stipends
- real estate appraisals
- construction or real estate improvements of any kind
- bonus payments of any kind
- charges for deficits, overdrafts, or contingency reserves
- interest expenses
- costs of services, materials or equipment funded under any other State program
- contract cost overruns
- legal representation in a court of law
- fund raising
- lobbying
- work which is performed outside the approved contract work period or which is not included in the *Scope of Work* set forth in the project agreement unless otherwise approved in writing by the ESP
- work performed on behalf of the governing agency which has not been awarded in compliance with the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.)

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

GRANT AMOUNT

A local environmental agency may apply for a matching grant ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. In a case where a joint environmental commission submits an application, the maximum amount shall be \$2,500 per participating municipality. The environmental agency ***must*** have the financial support of the local governing body to match the amount of its grant request. The Department will reimburse the local agency for fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost or \$2,500 – whichever is less. The source of matching funds may be outside the local government's budget provided that the matching funds are transferred and dedicated specifically for the local agency's project.

NOTE: **Funding is guaranteed only after a project agreement has been executed by the Department and the funds are subsequently obligated to the local environmental agency for that specific project.**

PAYMENT

The grantee will be **reimbursed** for its share of the grant project costs **after** the work products and financial documentation have been submitted and approved. The amount of payment will be based on the costs documented by receipts, invoices, payment vouchers and cancelled checks. If the project is completed under the budgeted amount, the costs will be divided between the State and the local agency. If the project runs over budget, the State will only reimburse the grantee up to the grant amount initially agreed upon.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following four items are necessary for an application to be considered complete:

- A certified copy (sealed by the municipal clerk) of the ordinance creating the environmental commission,
- A letter of commitment from the governing body stating that if the grant is awarded, matching funds would be made available,
- A completed copy of the Environmental Services Program Matching Grants Application Form – ES-1 (see page 11), and
- A copy of the project proposal. This is a narrative including an explanation of the project, a scope of work and a detailed budget (see page 7 for an outline of the project proposal).

NOTE: APPLICATION PACKAGES SUBMITTED WITHOUT ONE OR MORE OF THE ABOVE ITEMS WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE.

The contact person indicated on the application form will receive notification by January 14, 2005 that the application has been received.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grant applications will be ranked and evaluated based on the criteria outlined in N.J.A.C. 7:6-3.4(b) (See page 7, #2 A through G). Priority will be given to projects that:

- ✓ *Local Government and Community Support*- Has the support of local and/or county agencies, community organizations, civic groups, etc. Letters of support may be submitted as evidence of such support.

- ✓ *Regional Value*- Is responsive to regional as well as local needs. Projects undertaken jointly by

adjacent environmental agencies are encouraged.

- ✓ *Regulatory Assistance*- Integrates planning and regulatory goals of the DEP into the local and regional planning processes.
- ✓ *State Plan*- Projects that document and/or protect environmental resources that are of particular importance to local governments in implementing the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
- ✓ *Definitive Protection Strategy*- Produces a definitive strategy to protect a resource area, particularly, projects that integrate the regulation of environmentally sensitive areas and have a local, regional or Statewide open space and recreational planning goal.
- ✓ *Urban Needs*- Addresses urban environmental needs, particularly planning that integrates open space, recreation, historic resource protection and urban forest management.
- ✓ *Public Awareness*- Raises awareness of the public's responsibility to actively participate in protecting the environment.

NOTE: **Priority will be given to projects that support the objectives of the NJ State Plan, NJDEP Strategic Plan, and the Sustainable Communities Program. Projects should demonstrate or reflect the Department's goals and objectives for improving the environment and quality of life in New Jersey.**

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for filing the ESP Matching Grants Application is **Wednesday, December 15, 2004** (application packages must be postmarked by the deadline).

Project Proposal

In addition to the application form, a letter of intent from the governing body, and a certified copy of the founding ordinance, each applicant **must** submit a project proposal. The project proposal consists of the narrative, the scope of services, and the project budget. The following is an outline of what is to be included in the project proposal.

Narrative Outline

1 – Introduction – Please state the following regarding the proposed project:

- A. Project Purpose – explain the project’s purpose and describe its intent.
- B. Needs – indicate the environmental needs that will be addressed.
- C. Goals/Objectives – define the goals and/or objectives of the project.

2 – Grant Evaluation Criteria – Define how the project will meet each of the following criteria (limit the response to one paragraph for each):

- A. Local Government and Community Support – Detail the extent of community and government support for the proposed project. In addition to the support of the local governing body, does the project have the written endorsement of community organizations and other civic groups?
- B. Regional Value – Describe the project’s impact on a regional scale. How does the project meet the environmental needs of the region? Will it involve other municipalities and organizations throughout the area?
- C. Regulatory Assistance – How does the project integrate regulatory and planning goals of the DEP into the local process?
- D. State Development and Redevelopment Plan – Explain how the project supports the State Plan. Will the project document and/or protect environmental resources that are of particular importance to the local government in implementing the State Development and Redevelopment Plan?
- E. Definitive Protection Strategy – Describe how the project will protect environmental resources.
- F. Urban Needs – Indicate how the project will promote environmental quality in an urban setting.
- G. Public Awareness – Explain how the project will promote an understanding of the public’s responsibility to the environment. How does the project raise the public’s awareness? Does the project educate the public on environmental protection?

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Scope of Service

Directions: Indicate under Section C, the individual tasks that will be accomplished through this project and approximate the amount of time (in months) that it will take to accomplish the individual tasks. In addition, indicate under D, what work products will be submitted to the Environmental Services Program and the timeframe in which they will be submitted.

A. Name of Local Environmental Agency:_____

B. Project Title:_____

C. Description of Tasks

Project
Schedule*

**D. Work Products to be Submitted to the
Environmental Services Program (ESP)**

Schedule of
Delivery**

* Projected amount of time, in months, from the date the project begins until the task is completed.

** Month in which the work product(s) will be submitted (may not exceed 13 months).

Project Budget

Directions: Complete all parts of the budget. Incomplete or blank sections may result in application rejection.

A. Overall Budget by Category and Source:

	Project Cost	State Grant	Local Match	Other (if Applicable)
Total for Consultant(s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total for Other Cost(s)	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL	_____	_____	_____	_____

B. Budget Details:

1. Consultants - Specify the name(s) and/or the type(s) of consultants to be used for the project, e.g. landscape architect, planner, engineer, attorney, etc. Include any fees and/or expenses to be included in the project budget. **NOTE: The costs associated with these expenses may not exceed 50% of the total project cost unless otherwise determined to be eligible expenses by the Department.**

Description	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Other Cost Categories - Specify any other costs associated with completing the project which will be part of the total project cost, e.g. postage, photocopying, printing, binding, map purchase, map reproduction, computer software, equipment, etc.

Description	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Source(s) of matching funds (Check appropriate choice(s)):

<u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
_____ Municipal Budget FY _____	_____
_____ County Budget FY _____	_____
_____ Annual Seedling Sales (SCDs only)	_____
_____ Other: _____	_____

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PROGRAM
P.O. BOX 402
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0402
(609) 984-0828
(609) 633-2102 (fax)

ES-1

Directions: Please submit a copy of the project proposal, a letter of intent from the governing body, and a certified copy of the founding ordinance for the environmental commission along with this application form.

Environmental Agency Information

Name: _____ County: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Primary Contact Person

Name: _____ Title: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____
(This should be completed if the contact person does not frequently receive mail at the agency's mailing address)

Project Information

Title: _____

Total Project Cost: \$ _____ = Amount Requested: \$ _____ + Local Match: \$ _____

Governing Body Information

Name of Chief Financial Officer: _____

Official Title of CFO: _____ Federal Tax ID: _____

Certification

I hereby certify that the information provided on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

signature

print name

title

date